

08 JAN 2019

DATE : _____

DAY : Tuesday

DENR

IN THE NEWS

Strategic Communication and Initiative Service

SHOOTING STRAIGHT

BOBIT S. AVILA

The cleaning up of Manila Bay starts now

The first week of the New Year 2019 has passed and things are happening fast like the text I got from my dear friend, Commodore Robert "Bobby" Joseph who text me last Friday this message "I am glad that Sec. Roy Cimatu has decided once and for all to clean up Manila Bay in One Year! The Manila Bay Yacht Club (MYC) and the Rotary Club of Manila is supporting the project of Sec. Cimatu. Come Jan. 15th local government officials will meet at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to listen to Sec. Cimatu's plans and strategies. It is expected that more organizations will join this development and building owners are expected to have their sewage treatment plants installed immediately. Thank you Chief of the DENR to be the first serious leader to make this happen."



I love to hear good news in the first week of January. Actually this already materialized way back in 2013 when the Supreme Court (SC) supported the call to have the Manila Bay waters cleaned up. If you recall, it was on December 18, 2008, when the Supreme Court issued the mandamus directing 13 government agencies – DENR, Metro Manila Development Authority; Departments of Environment and Natural Resources; Education; Health; Agriculture-Bureau of Fisheries; Public Works and Highways; Budget and Management; Interior and Local Government; Philippine Coast Guard, Philippine National Police-Maritime Group, Philippine Ports Authority, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, and Local Water Utilities Administration – to clean up, rehabilitate and preserve Manila Bay in their different capacities to clean up the Manila Bay.

But somehow because the Aquino government's wasn't serious about anything, years passed and no one cared about Manila Bay until we wrote to challenge Sir Bobby Joseph as the MYC made him their Commodore. But the cleaning up of Manila Bay can really be done if the top leaders of the national government make it their advocacy.

To be totally honest about it... no one thought that Pres. Rodrigo "Digong" Duterte would be serious in his call to clean up the "Cesspool" in the fable isle of Boracay... but the President showed us that he had the political will to do things though impossible by many and he did it. Six months later Boracay has reopened, not a hundred percent, but at least it is no longer the cesspool that it once was.

The DENR is aiming to rehabilitate the heavily-polluted Manila Bay and eventually make it fit for swimming once again. DENR Secretary Cimatu pointed out "The current level now is 330 million MPN. The objective is to bring it to a level, which it can be swimmable. The coliform level must be less than 100 mpn." MPN refers to most probable number of fecal coliform bacteria per 100 milliliter. So this is the marching orders of the DENR Secretary starting in the month of January. Sec. Cimatu said the DENR's initiative to rehabilitate the Manila Bay is in accordance with the writ of continuing mandamus to clean up the body of water issued a decade ago.

Again, I'd like to point out that the SC issued that mandamus to 13 government agencies in the Year 2008 that is 11 years ago that these government agencies defied our SC. Make me wonder why the SC did not sanction these agencies that willfully defied an SC order? Perhaps my good friend, Atty. Antonio Oposa did not file any cases against these agencies, but I would like to believe that their defiance had nothing to do with corruption; rather it is simply common government incompetence that made them defy the SC! Perhaps this time around, newly appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Lucas Bersamin would come up with a new set of rules or penalties for agencies that refuse a Supreme Court order.

Meanwhile, unlike Boracay which has numerous resorts that were in trouble... in Manila Bay there are no resorts except for a few that could be in trouble. But this Jan. 15th meeting with the Local Government officials and the DENR someone should tell them that there are a lot of great tourism projects that could be created if the waters of Manila Bay would be cleaned. One of them is the coming of cruise ships into Manila because there are enough business destinations for tourists to come and visit.

Sure people may soon be able to swim in Manila Bay, but it should be on a well-guarded place or destination. Then there are tourist boats that can bring tourists to place like Cavite and the site of the famous Battle of Manila Bay...a tourism project that was never made because the Manila Bay just smell like a huge toilet. We should not forget that Manila Bay is a historical destination but realize that it can never be a tourism destination for as long as the national government doesn't spearhead this clean up drive... best of all, we have a Pres. Duterte who has the political will to do this!

* * *

Email: vsbobita@gmail.com

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MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

08 JAN 2012

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DENR eyes Morong beach for next clean up

By MART SUPNAD

MORONG, Bataan – After the partial reopening of Boracay Island after a partial rehabilitation, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) is now setting its sights on this coastal town as its next target for a massive coastal cleanup, a top DENR official here revealed Monday.

DENR Provincial Environment

and Natural Resources Officer Raul H. Mamac disclosed that DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu, himself, had told him that the next target of a massive cleanup will be the coastal area of Morong town.

Mamac said this was relayed to him in the recent New Year's call by department heads and key officials with Cimatu.

"Our secretary mentioned and identified Morong Beach as one of the beach areas in Region 3 to be the next rehabilitation target after Boracay,"

said Mamac.

"Nagpeprepara na kami ng action plans and I already coordinated with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) and (Morong) Mayor Cynthia Estanislao yesterday about the issue. Malaking issue ito kaya we need the media's support and, of course, (that of) our governor Abet Garcia," said Mamac.

Mamac pointed out that Bataan Bay, which is located in the western portion of Manila Bay, was one of the areas

classified by Cimatu as among the areas located in Manila Bay that would need a massive cleanup.

The other areas are the waters off Metro Manila, Cavite and Bulacan.

"Boracay has no industries dumping wastes into the sea, so it was easier to clean it up. But if the public will support us and the government agencies in the cleanup of Manila Bay, then we can do it," pointed out Mamac, who was among the DENR officials who took part in the six-month Boracay cleanup.



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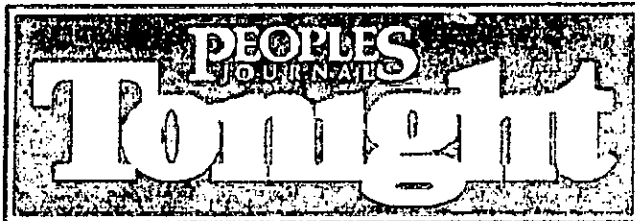
CARTOON

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• El Niño preparations

ILOILO CITY - With the projected El Niño climate phenomenon expected to hit later this year, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-6) is already prepared to deal with forest fires that will hit several areas in the Western Visayas region. "We want to be ready once forest fires occur," DENR-6 regional director Jim Sampulna told Manila Bulletin Monday. Intense dry spell and intense heat generated from the El Niño can trigger forest fires, which have happened previously on sites of DENR's Expanded National Greening Program (ENGP). DENR-6 has already trained forest rangers from Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Guimaras, Iloilo, and Negros Occidental provinces in fire management. (Tara Yap)



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EDITORIAL

Environmental laws

WITHOUT doubt, there are positive developments that make the Filipino people look forward to 2019 with more optimism in protecting and preserving the environment.

In fact, the government is sending a strong message to the public that it is serious in implementing and enforcing environmental laws, rules and regulations across the country.

What's needed is for the government to sustain the momentum created by the successful rehabilitation of the once "cesspool" Boracay Island, said DENR Secretary Roy Cimatu.

He said the government is looking forward to duplicating the feat in other top tourist destinations, including El Nido and Puerto Galera in Palawan and Panglao Island in Bohol.

Cimatu, a former chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), described the rehabilitation of Boracay Island as the "centerpiece" of our 2018 accomplishments.

"With the eyes of the world upon us, we set forth to do what cynics thought was impossible: to transform a cesspool back to being one of the world's best beaches and swimming destinations," he said.

Cimatu said the government, through various offices and agencies, did the trick in just six months.

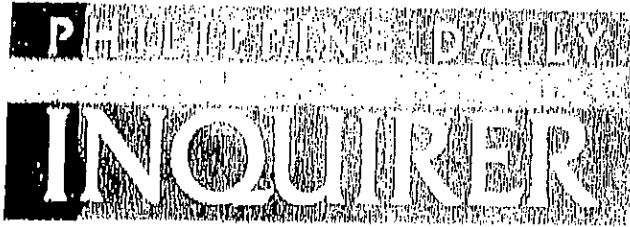
In some parts of this poverty-stricken nation, the inability of certain local government officials to strictly enforce environmental laws, rules and regulations demoralizes people.

Certainly, this is saddening, disgusting and lamentable because there's that urgent need to maintain the beauty and splendor of the country's principal tourist destinations.

Let's remember that our dollar-oriented tourist industry remains as a major pillar of the country's economy.



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BORACAY ACTION PLAN

NEDA: BORACAY NEEDS P25.27-B INVESTMENTS TO BE SUSTAINABLE

Fully rehabilitating the top tourist spot Boracay Island after its six-month closure last year will entail P25.27 billion in investments from both the government and the private sector, the state planning agency National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) said on Monday.

In a statement, Neda said this investment requirement was identified in the medium-term Boracay Action Plan (BAP) adopted last December by the Boracay Interagency Task Force. Neda spearheaded the crafting of the BAP.

It said P16.21 billion, or almost two-thirds of the total investments needed to ensure that Boracay would be sustainable moving forward, would be spent on infrastructure development.

The bulk of these investments worth P15.89 billion will be shouldered by the private sector.

The entire BAP listed 233 programs, projects and activities aimed at "[instilling] safeguards from ecological degradation and sustain tourism activities in Boracay."

"It (the BAP) primarily provides the strategic interventions to ensure the island's re-

habilitation over the medium term and sustainable management over the long term," Neda Undersecretary Adoracion Navarro said.

The BAP was aimed at making Boracay a "secure and globally competitive world-class tourism destination with a vibrant, productive and climate-resilient economy that is geared toward inclusive growth and anchored on the sustainable development of its innate natural resources."

The plan is awaiting President Duterte's approval. Neda said that once the President approved the BAP, it would be implemented until 2022.

The Boracay Interagency Task Force was formed under Executive Order No. 53 after Mr. Duterte ordered the popular tourist destination shut down between April and October last year for environmental degradation.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary and Neda chief Ernesto Pernia had partly blamed the slower economic growth posted during the second and third quarters of 2018 to Boracay's temporary closure, which impacted on the tourism sector. —BEN O. DE VERA INQ



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Task force adopts Boracay action plan

By CHINO S. LEYCO

The Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force adopted the medium-term action plan for the country's premier tourist destination, formally laying out proposed programs for the island's rehabilitation.

The Boracay Action Plan (BAP), which was adopted last December 21, will install safeguards from ecological degradation and sustain tourism activities in the southern island.

Socioeconomic Planning Undersecretary Adoracion M. Navarro said yesterday that these programs and activities will be implemented following Boracay's six-month closure period, which took place from April to October last year.

"It primarily provides the strategic interventions to ensure the island's rehabilitation over the medium term and sustainable management over the long term," Navarro said in a statement.

The Plan embodies the stakeholders' vision of a "secure and globally-competitive world-

class tourism destination with a vibrant, productive and climate-resilient economy that is geared toward inclusive growth and anchored on the sustainable development of its innate natural resources."

Moreover, the plan has four thematic areas, namely: enforcement of laws and regulations, pollution control and prevention, rehabilitation and recovery of the ecosystem, and sustainability of island activities.

The proposed estimated total investment requirement for the plan is ₱25.27 billion for all thematic areas. Notably, a total of ₱16.21 billion (64 percent of the total) will be allotted for infrastructure.

The indicative number of programs, projects, and activities combined under all the thematic areas is 233. The private sector will finance ₱15.89 billion or 62.9 percent of the total cost.

Created by Executive Order (EO) No. 53, the interagency task force is tasked to formulate an action plan that serves as a guide for Boracay Island's rehabilitation.



Task force adopts P25.27-B action plan for Boracay's sustainability

By ELIJAH FELICE E. ROSALES [@alyasjah](#)

THE Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force (BIATF) has adopted an action plan that will require P25.27 billion of investment for projects and programs intended to sustain the rehabilitated island resort.

In a news statement issued on Monday, the task force announced it has adopted the medium-term Boracay Action Plan that identified programs for the island's continued rehabilitation. The BAP seeks to install safeguards to prevent ecological degradation and sustain tourism activities in Boracay.

The projects and programs under the BAP will be rolled out as a follow-up to Boracay's half a year shutdown, which took place last April to October.

The BAP has four thematic areas: enforcement of laws and regulations; pollution control and prevention; rehabilitation and recovery of the eco-

system; and sustainability of island activities. The task force claimed the action plan is in line with the stakeholders' vision of a vibrant tourist destination that is sustainable and is geared toward inclusive growth.

The estimated total investment requirement to realize all the projects, programs and activities under the BAP is P25.27 billion, of which 64 percent, or P16.21 billion, is allocated for infrastructure.

According to the task force, the BAP has a combined number of 233 projects and programs. The private sector, for its part, will shoulder nearly 63 percent, or P15.89 billion, of the total cost.

"It primarily provides the strategic interventions to ensure the island's rehabilitation over the medium term and sustainable management over the long term," Socio-

economic Planning Undersecretary Adoracion M. Navarro said.

Created by Executive Order 53, the BIATF is mandated to craft a course of action that will serve as a framework for the rehabilitation of the island resort. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the lead agency of the task force, designated the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) to take charge of the BAP Committee.

Further, numerous regional and national level meetings were organized by the Neda to ensure that key interventions from both the government and private organizations are included into the BAP.

The BAP will be submitted for approval of President Duterte upon the recommendation of the Cabinet. Once inked by the President, it will be implemented until 2022.



Boracay Action Plan adopted

By Elmer N. Manuel

The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) on Monday announced the creation of the Boracay Action Plan that seeks to install safeguards from ecological degradation and sustain tourism activities in the island.

The plan – which was adopted by the government – will have programs and activities that will be implemented on the heels of Boracay's six-month closure period, which took place from April to October 2018.

The agency also said the private sector will finance P15.89 billion or 62.9 percent of the total cost.



"The Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force has adopted the P25-billion Medium-Term Boracay Action Plan, which lays out the proposed programs for the island's rehabilitation," the NEDA said in a statement.

It was formally assumed on 21 December 2018, covering a total of 233 programs, projects and activities.

The proposed estimated total investment requirement for the plan is P25.27 billion, of which P16.21 billion or 64 percent will be allotted for infrastructure.

The agency also said the private sector will finance P15.89 billion or 62.9 percent of the total cost.

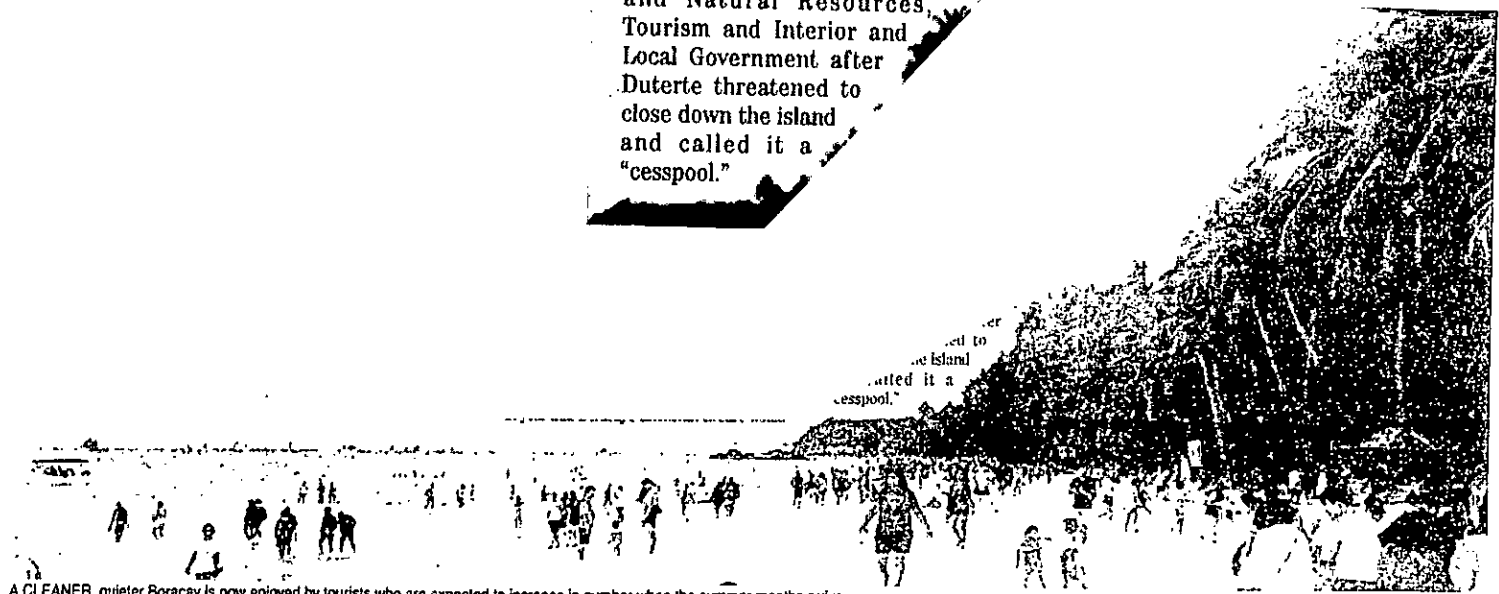
"It primarily provides the strategic interventions to ensure the island's rehabilitation over the medium term and sustainable management over the long term," said NEDA Undersecretary Adoracion Navarro.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pemia earlier estimated last year that Boracay's six-month closure would

incur as much as P1.96 billion in economic losses.

After the world-famous island resort reopened in October, tourist arrivals have been limited to only 6,405 per day and only 19,000 tourists are allowed at any given time.

President Rodrigo Duterte ordered the closure to make way for an ecological rehabilitation which was recommended by the Departments of Environment and Natural Resources, Tourism and Interior and Local Government after Duterte threatened to close down the island and called it a "cesspool."



A CLEANER, quieter Boracay is now enjoyed by tourists who are expected to increase in number when the summer months arrive.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



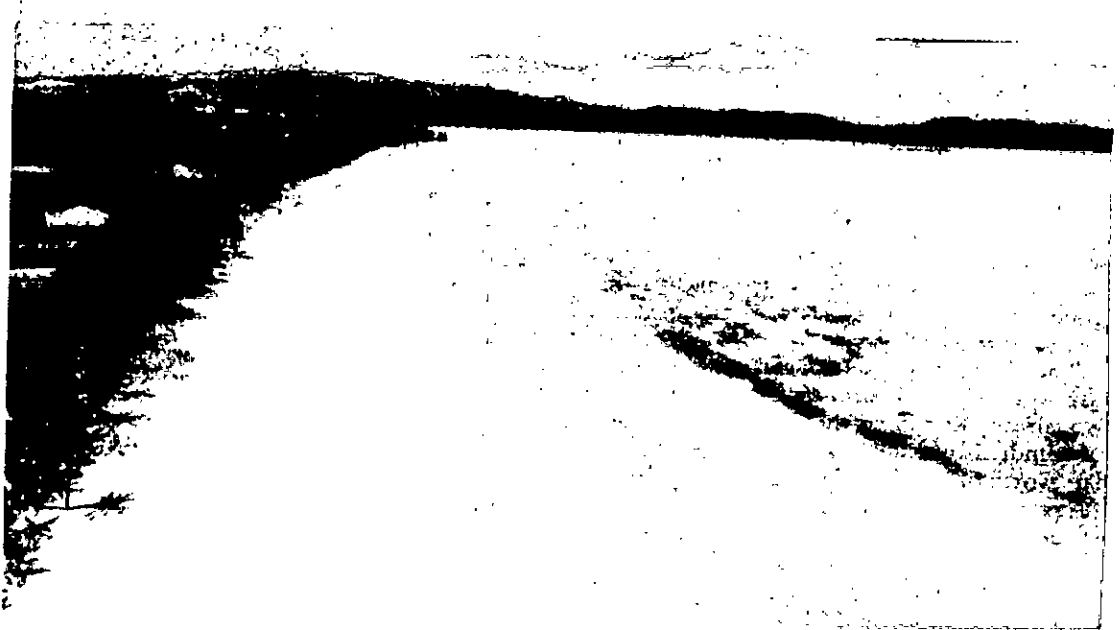
Boracay rehabilitation to cost P25B: NEDA

BY ANGELA CELIS

THE Medium-Term Boracay Action Plan (BAP), which formally lays out the proposed programs for the island's rehabilitation, has an estimated total investment requirement of P25.27 billion, according to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA).

NEDA said in a statement yesterday the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force recently adopted the BAP which is aimed at installing safeguards from ecological degradation and sustain tourism activities in Boracay.

The private sector will finance P15.89 billion or 62.9 percent of the total cost, NEDA said. Of the proposed investment requirement,



..... **Back to its glory.** The action plan will ensure Boracay remains a secure and globally-competitive world-class tourism desti-

64 percent or P16.21 billion will be allotted for infrastructure.

The agency said the programs and activities will be implemented following Boracay's six-month closure period, which took place from April to October 2018.

"It primarily provides the strategic interventions to ensure the island's rehabilitation over the medium term and sustainable management over the long term," Adoracion Navarro, NEDA undersecretary, said.

NEDA said the plan embodies the stakeholders' vision of a "secure and globally-competitive world-class tourism destination with a vibrant, productive and climate-resilient

economy that is geared toward inclusive growth and anchored on the sustainable development of its innate natural resources."

The BAP has four thematic areas: enforcement of laws and regulations, pollution control and prevention, rehabilitation and recovery of the ecosystem, and sustainability of island activities.

The indicative number of programs, projects and activities combined under all the thematic areas is 233.

Created by Executive Order (EO) No. 53 s. 2018, the Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force is tasked to formulate an action plan that serves as a guide for Boracay Island's

rehabilitation.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the head of the task force, designated NEDA to lead the Boracay Action Plan Committee.

NEDA said it has organized several regional and national level meetings to ensure that key interventions from both government and private organizations are incorporated into the BAP.

Consistent with EO 53, the BAP will be submitted "for approval of the President upon the recommendation of the Cabinet."

Once approved by the President, the BAP will be implemented until 2022.

bank secrecy laws, the automatic exchange of tax information and the implementation of three types of amnesties (on estate tax, on all unpaid internal revenue taxes with the corresponding waiver of bank secrecy laws before availment, and on delinquencies).

Package 1-B, which also covers proposals on other amnesty taxes such as importation taxes and customs duties, has been tackled by Congress via several bills.

The DOF proposal to adjust the MVUC rates to account for inflation, as the fees have been frozen since 2004,

and the transfer of the Road fund to the General Fund is pending in the House public works committee, while the Senate has yet to file a counterpart measure, Chua said.

"While the transfer of the Road funds to the General Fund will improve the transparency and accountability of its use, it does not add any revenue at all, as the MVUC is also part of the existing revenue base," Chua said.

He said only adjustment to the MVUC rates will increase revenues earmarked for road repairs, air pollution control and road safety improvements.



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Govt task force endorses ₱25-b medium-term Boracay action plan

THE Boracay Inter-Agency Task Force adopted the Medium-Term Boracay Action Plan on Dec. 21, formally laying out programs for the island's rehabilitation, the National Economic and Development Authority said Monday.

Neda said the task force would install safeguards from ecological degradation and sustain tourism activities in Boracay. These programs and activities would be implemented following Boracay's six-month closure from April to October 2018.

"It primarily provides the strategic interventions to ensure the island's rehabilitation over the medium term and sustainable management over the long term," Neda Undersecretary Adoracion Navarro said.

She said the plan embodied the stakeholders' vision of a "secure and globally-competitive world-class tourism destination with a vibrant, productive and climate-resilient economy that is geared toward inclusive growth and anchored on the sustainable development of its innate natural resources."

The plan has four thematic areas, namely: enforcement of laws and regulations, pollution control and prevention, rehabilitation and recovery of the ecosystem, and sustainability of island activities.

The proposed estimated total investment requirement for the plan is P25.27 billion for all thematic areas, including P16.21 billion (64 percent of the total) for infrastructure. **Julito G. Rada**



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Illegal logging blamed for Calbayog flooding

Samar solon asks DENR to probe villagers' complaint; 'no-build zone' eyed in CamSur barangay hit by landslide

By Jennifer Allegado
 and Joey Gabieta
 @inquirervisayas

TACLOBAN CITY—Residents have blamed rampant illegal logging for the massive flood brought by Tropical Depression "Usman" that devastated last week a remote village in Calbayog City.

At least 87 houses were swept away by floods at Barangay Cag-anahaw, which could only be reached by three-hour walk from nearby Barangay Tarabucan.

"This was the first time this happened in our village. We really did not expect this," said Letecia Garalza, a teacher in Cag-anahaw, adding that illegal logging in the area was the culprit.

"We are asking for help to rebuild our houses. What we need right now are materials for the construction of our houses," she said.

The City Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office said at least five people died at the height of Usman, four of them were from Cag-anahaw while another was from Barangay Cabatuan.

Complaint

Samar Rep. Edgar Mary Sarmiento asked residents of Cag-anahaw to file a formal complaint against those whom they suspected to be behind illegal logging in their village.

"I also ask the village officials to man up and perform your functions, your duties in protecting your barangay against illegal activities," he said.

Sarmiento said his office had asked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to look into reports of il-



HOMELESS Families in the village of Cag-anahaw in Calbayog City are homeless after floods, which they blame on illegal logging, destroyed their houses as Tropical Depression "Usman" crossed the Visayas. —ELEN LIM / CONTRIBUTOR

legal logging in the village.

Usman's heavy rains triggered floods and landslides in Eastern Visayas. Houses and government buildings worth at least P54.5 million were damaged.

The Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) in Eastern Visayas said several major roads in Samar (formerly Western Samar), Eastern Samar and Northern Samar provinces were damaged due to landslides and floods.

No-build zone

Samar sustained the most damage to infrastructure with the total amount estimated at P27.5 million, the DPWH said.

Heavily damaged were the Calbayog diversion road, the roads that connect Calbayog to Allen town, and another road that links Calbayog to Catarman town, all in Northern Samar.

In Camarines Sur province, disaster response officials

were studying the declaration of a village in Buhi town as a "no-build zone" following the devastation from Usman.

On Sunday, police reported that 11 residents of Ipil, all members of the indigenous peoples group Mt. Iraya Agta, died in a landslide that hit Sitio Mabuyod.

Carmelita Marquez, Buhi disaster risk reduction and management office chief, said the death toll in Buhi rose to 22, most of them tribe members.

Buhi Mayor Margarita Aguinillo said a team of geologists from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) were studying whether to declare Ipil a no-build zone after cracks were discovered on a mountain slope in the village following heavy rains that triggered landslides.

"With this dangerous situation, we need the recommendation of the MGB whether to relocate close to

369 families," Marquez said.

Agri losses

In Manila, Agriculture Secretary Emmanuel Piñol said the government was expecting agricultural losses from Usman to breach the P1-billion mark.

Piñol, however, assured farmers that the Department of Agriculture (DA) was ready to assist those who were affected by the calamity.

Piñol said that aside from the loan programs of the agency, the DA's P1-billion quick response fund could be used to rehabilitate areas hit by floods and landslides.

He said P200 million would be used to repair irrigation canals and facilities.

"We have also committed P175 million in easy access credit in the [affected] provinces since last week," Piñol added. —WITH REPORTS FROM MAR ARGUELLES, REY ANTHONY OSTRIA AND KARLO CAMPO INQ



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Banned forest products seized in Butuan City, Agusan del Sur

By **MIKE U. CRISMUNDO**

CAMP COL. RAFAEL C. RODRIGUEZ, Butuan City – Alert anti-illegal logging task force of the Northeastern Mindanao Police Regional Office 13 (PRO 13) confiscated illegally-cut banned forest products in three successful operations conducted over the weekend in Butuan City and Agusan del Sur, police reported yesterday.

Six men were arrested while more than P880,000 worth of illegally cut lumbers and fitches were confiscated in these three operations on Saturday and Sunday.

Identities of the six arrested persons are temporarily withheld pending arrest of their financiers.

PRO 13 Regional Director Chief Supt. Gilberto DC Cruz told The Manila Bulletin on Monday that during the checkpoint conducted by personnel of Butuan City Mobile Force Company at Barangay Bancasi here, they apprehended two mini dump trucks loaded with 356 pieces assorted Mahogany fitches, with a total measure of 5,015.33 board feet worth P790,000.

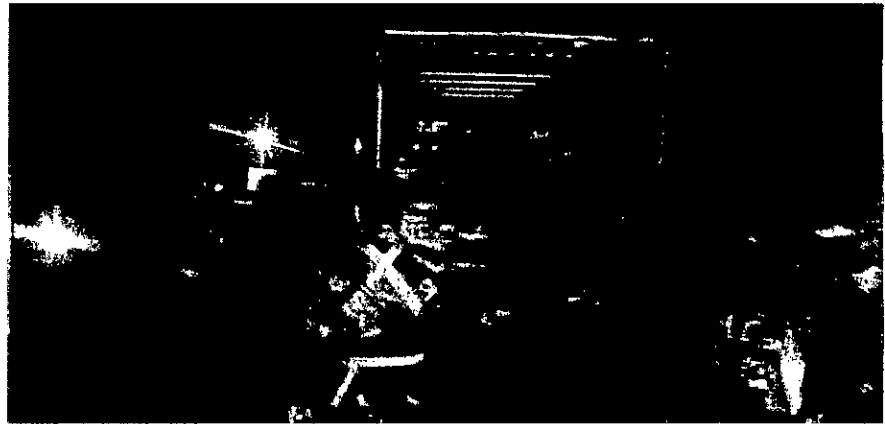
Four persons, all residents of Gingoog City, were arrested in the opera-

tion and were taken into custody by the Trento Municipal Police Station (MPS) for further investigation, while the confiscated van and forest products were placed under the custody of 1303rd Maneuver Company (RMFB13) for proper disposition, the region's police chief said.

Responding on a report from Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) Bunawan Anti-illegal Logging Task

Force, personnel of Regional Mobile Force Battalion 13, together with Trento MPS, also flagged down a closed van in Sitio Maitum, Langkilaan, Trento, Agusan del Sur. It was found to be loaded with 342 pieces of mixed dipterocarp with estimated volume of 3,118.11 board feet and market value of P77,952.75.

Two persons, both residents of Davao del Norte, were arrested and are now in the custody of Trento MPS.



HOT LOGS – Illegally-cut forest products are shown inside this van in one of three successful operations conducted over the weekend in Butuan City and Agusan del Sur by the Northeastern Mindanao Police Region Office (PRO 13). (Photo courtesy of PRO 13)



DENR, handa na sa forest fire

ILOILO CITY - Pinaghahandaan na ng pamahalaan ang inaasahang epekto sa bansa ng El Niño phenomenon, ayon sa Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Region 6 (DENR-6).

Inihayag ni DENR-6 Regional director Jim Sampulna, gumagawa na sila ng mga hakbang sa posibleng pagsiklab ng forest fire sa kagutaban ng Western Visayas region.

"We want to be ready once forest fires occur," aniya.

Ang matindi aniyang tagtuyot at init na dulot ng El Niño ay maaaring magdulot ng sunog sa kagubatan, katulad ng dati nang naranasan sa mga lugar na saklaw ng Expanded National Greening Program (ENGP) ng ahensya.

Ang mga forest ranger aniya sa Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Guimaras, Iloilo, at Negros Occidental, ay

isinailalim na nila sa training program na may kinalaman sa fire management.

Aniya, inatasan na nito ang Response and Emergency Action Teams (REACT) ng ahensya na makipagtulungan sa Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) at sa local forest guards sa implementasyon

ng kanilang estratehiya.

"We need to protect these forested areas and we must act to contain these projected fires," sabi pa ni Sampulna.

Tara Yap



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ANG NANGUNGUNANG PAHAYAGANG TAGALOG SA BANGSA

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ILLEGAL LOGGING Kabilang lamang ito sa mga nasamsam na kahoy na nagmula sa pinutol na mga puno sa kagubatan ng Butuan City at Agusan del Sur, kamakailan.

MIKE U. CRISMUNDO



Basura ng Canada noong 2013 anyare na?

KINALAMPAG ng isang senador ang Canada kaugnay sa ulat ng mga waste material na itinambak sa bansa noong taong 2013.

Ang apela ay ginawa ni Senador Aquilino 'Koko' Pimentel, matapos mapagkasunduan ng mga Pilipino at Korean authority na ibalik ngayong Enero 9 sa South Korea ang tone-toneladang basura na itinambak sa bansa noong Hulyo 2018.

Ayon kay Pimentel, napako na ang ipinangakong resolba sa basura ng Prime Minister ng Canada noong Nobyembre ng taong 2017, sa kasagsagan ng 31st ASEAN Summit.

Hanggang sa ngayon, sinabi ni Pimentel na hindi na umaksyon ang Canada sa ipinangakong nilang return of trash.

Kung kaya, hinikayat ni Pimentel ang gobyerno na magsagawa ng follow-up at update sa Canada upang madaling maaksiyuna ang mga itinambak na basura.

"As far as I'm aware, as of January 2018, the matter has yet to be resolved. The Canadian Prime Minister promised to resolve the matter when he went here for the 31st ASEAN Summit in November 2017. There's been no follow through ever since. We need immediate and concrete action on this," sabi ni Pimentel.

"We're not someone else's dumping ground. The Philippines should assert its dignity and co-equal standing as a sovereign state in the community of nations. We should not be seen as a recipient, officially or unofficially, of waste material coming from other countries," gitang senador. (Anne Lorraine Gamo)



Hindi basurahan ang Pilipinas!

'UNCOVERED'



NI MARLON PURIFICACION

PAHAYAG ito ni dating Senate President Aquilino 'Koko' Pimentel III bilang reaksiyon sa ginawang pagtatapon ng basura ng bansang Korea at Canada sa ating bansa.

Ayon kay Pimentel, dignidad na ng Pilipinas

ang nakataya sa mga pangyayaring ganito na hindi dapat palagpasin ng kasalukuyang pamahalaan.

Kung matatandaan, buwan ng Hunyo hanggang Agosto, taong 2013 at December 2013 hanggang January 2014, 50 container van ang dumating sa Pilipinas na punung-puno ng basura. Nangyari ito sa anim na magkakasunod kung saan ay hanggang ngayon hindi kinukuha ng bansang Canada ang mga nasabing basura.

Kamakailan ay 6,500

tonelada ang dumating naman sa Mindanao mula sa bansang South Korea. Mga pangyayaring hindi magandang tingnan dahil sumasalamin ito kung paano binababoy ang Pilipinas hindi lamang bilang isang bansa -- kundi bilang isang nasyon na dapat sana'y may malinaw na pamantayan tungkol sa usapin ng kapaligiran, kalinisan at paghihigpit sa mismong pantalan.

Sa pananaw ng senador, dapat igiit ng Pilipinas ang ating dignidad at co-equal standing bilang

sovereign state sa pamamagitan ng hindi pagtanggap ng basura sa ibang bansa.

At kahit sinong bansa ay hindi papayag sa mga ganitong uri ng kababuyan at paglapastangan.

Bagaman nagbigay na ng katiyakan ang pamahalaan ng South Korea na kunin pabalik sa kanilang bayan ang mga tonelada ng basurang ipinasok sa Pilipinas ay hindi dapat matapos sa ganitong uri ng senaryo ang maduming pangyayari.

Ayon kay Pimentel, tu-

matakbo muli sa pagkasenador ngayong darating na mid-term elections, dapat maging malinaw ang 'guidelines' sa pagtanggap ng kargamento sa pantalan -- ito'y basura man, illegal o legal na kontrabando.

Kung matatandaan, napag-usapan pa sa nakalipas na Asean Summit ang ginawang pagpasok ng basura ng Canada sa Pilipinas mula taong 2013 hanggang 2014. Sa kabila ng binitiwang pangako ni Canadian President Justin Trudeau na kukuning pabalik sa kanilang bansa

ang mga basura ay wala pa ring nangyayari hinggil dito bagay na kahit usaping pangkalusugan ay dapin at na ring pagtuunang pansin ng pamahalaan.

Pabor tayo sa sinabi ni Pimentel na hindi dapat kinukunsinti ang mga ganitong aksyon at dapat mabigyan ng karampatang parusa ang sinumang kawani ng pamahalaan na nagpabaya para palusutan ng tone-toneladang basura sa bansa.

May binuo nang Technical Working Group (TWG) para pag-usapan kung

paano isauli ang mga nasabing basura sa kani-kanilang bansang pinagmulan. Ang TWG ay binubuo ng Department of Justice, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Foreign Affairs at Bureau of Customs.

Harinawa'y may mangyari sa binuong grupong ito upang bukod sa maibalik na sa Canada at South Korea ang mga dumating sa ating basura ay hindi na ito maulit pa sa mga susunod na araw dahil kapag nangyari uli ito sa atin -- talagang malaki na ang problema sa usaping seguridad sa ating mga pantalan.



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FROM THE STANDS

DOMINI M. TORREVILLAS

Wishes



Marroquin Alas Fernandez has died. I write those words in bold letters because Marroquin was my – and everyone's – favorite piano teacher in Gingoog city. I can picture him now – seated behind an old, well-loved piano standing on an elevated stage in the sala of his house, playing classics and romantic pieces with gusto, oblivious to the world around him. He would then move across the room, and go up a couple of steps to another stage to play an organ.

Also called Mark, his life was devoted to playing the two instruments, in United Church of Christ in the Philippines churches, and school programs and private parties. He also tutored students in piano – including my whole family in the 1950s. He came to the house Saturday mornings, and first thing he did – always – was play "Poet and Peasant," a one-hour long piece. A few weeks ago, when we visited him in his house in Cabelto Extension, he played the piece to humor me, and a few days later gave me ornamental plants for my just-started garden.

Mark was the eldest son of the late pastor Eugenio de la Pena Fernandez and Nena Alas. His father graduated at Ashbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky, majoring in theology. When he returned to the Philippines, he served as a pastor at Binalonan, Pangasinan then transferred to Butuan City, and then to barrio Anakan, and finally brought his family to Gingoog.

Mark was born on Oct. 21, 1933 in Binalonan. He finished his elementary and high school education in that town, and for college, he attended Pacifican college at Urdaneta as an education student, major in music.

He earned his living as a music teacher and became a music supervisor and retired with that position at DepEd Gingoog city. When he retired he was the president of the Senior Citizen club and principal of the UCCP Pre-school.

Mark's brothers were diligently loyal to their *manong*. Victory, married to Adelaida Ocampo, lives in Lipa, Batangas. Zoilo, married to Aurora, was a purchaser for Baguio Country Club. Morrisson is married to Tessie Paasa of Kauswagan, CDO. Love Joy, once an OFW as electrician, and wife Gloria Cairhug live in Baybay, Leyte. Florencio and Venus Simeon live in Gingoog city, their house behind Mark's.

Susana, Mark's only sister, was my classmate at Gingoog Institute. She was a campus figure, a chinky-eyed band majorette who won the heart of a lawyer watching her from a side street twirl the baton – Alejo F. Rola who became a judge assigned to Malaybalay Bukidnon. The late judge and Susan have five children: Reynald, a retired branch manager; Alexander is employed at DENR, Cagayan de Oro city; Lalaine, who is presently employed as a legal researcher of RTC Branch 39, CDO, is married to Bienvenido V. Esmeralda Jr., the OIC regional director of the Bureau of Treasury, Region X. Alejo Jr, is the Northern Mindanao sales manager of a company selling electrical equipment. Lyndon is an entrepreneur.

From his earnings as a pianist/organist, Mark sent all his siblings to school.

We shall miss you, Mark, but the music you made stays in our hearts forever.

* * *



Incineration won't solve garbage problem

By Maya M. Padillo

DAVAO CITY — The Ateneo de Davao University (AdDU) advocacy group for environmental protection and conservation Ecoteneo has reiterated that the proposed waste-to-energy (WTE) by the city government of Davao is not a solution to garbage management.

“Our stand remains: WTE is still not the main option to address waste problems in the city,” Carmela Santos, director of Ecoteneo, told media in Kapehan sa Dabaw yesterday.

In 2017, Davao and its Japanese sister city Kitakyushu explored cooperation wherein the latter would help the city with best practices in solid waste management and environmental protection through the establishment of a WTE facility since Davao City disposes of all wastes in a landfill.

Last year, Mayor Sara Duterte, together with seven city officials and two representatives from an environment watchdog, also traveled to Japan upon the invitation of the Japanese firm in the City of Kitakyushu to observe its own WTE operation.

She later issued an executive order creating a team to oversee the construction of a WTE facility, a joint project between the governments of the Philippines and Japan with Davao City as its intended recipient.

Ecoteneo and other green groups in the city deemed WTE as a form of incineration that is banned under the Clean Air Act. The groups emphasized that said facility is not the correct solution to address the city’s problem on waste disposal.

However, if the proposal should materialize, Santos said the best

thing to do is to minimize its harmful effects and to practice waste segregation to minimize the materials that would be processed in a WTE facility.

Environmentalists say waste incineration creates dioxins, a highly toxic compound.

The project was endorsed by then mayor now President Rodrigo Duterte when he met with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) representatives in 2016.

Ecoteneo and other green groups in the city deemed WTE as a form of incineration that is banned under the Clean Air Act.

The proposal was based on a feasibility study supported by JICA under its Collaboration Program with the Private Sector for Disseminating Japanese Technology.

In 2017, the City Environment and Natural Resources Office collected 400 to 500 tons of garbage daily.

In its aim to make Davao City waste- and plastic-free, Ecoteneo will conduct a Zero Waste Summit this month with barangay and school leaders as targeted participants.

“Because we want to have a coordinated action plan for ecowaste to strictly implement segregation. This is also a follow-up of the recent implementation of the single-use plastic ban in AdDU. We’ve been implementing this policy since October 2018 our university has gone plastic-free. We’re inviting barangays and schools to send their leaders and join us for the planning,” she said.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND INITIATIVES SERVICE

'Basura Mo Kabuhayan Ko' project thriving in Siquijor

IT is the perfect time of the year when we have to start calling for support to this sprouting project that gives justice and integrity to God's creations — ecology and people.

Perfect because this is the time of the year when bottles, plastics, metals, papers and other recyclable items fresh from the holiday celebrations are found anywhere.

Some care to segregate and reuse them, while others just toss them right away to the trash bins, ending up in landfills and hurting the environment.

The 'Basura Mo Kabuhayan Ko' project was recently introduced by a Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) volunteer to some locals in Siquijor island.

At least 45 beneficiaries of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program of the Caticugan Dumahog Pantawid-Sustainable Livelihood Association (CADUPA-SLA) in the town of Siquijor have operated and managed the Basura Mo Kabuhayan Ko Level II project in Brgy. Caticugan, Siquijor, Siquijor.

The project started with the assistance of a JICA volunteer who oriented and trained them on recycling/upcycling project and donated one Heat Press.

The local government Siquijor also gave their counterpart of P100,000 worth of construction materials for the SLP Building that will be



turned over to the association within this month.

The association, with the various upcycled and recycled products, has been active in local government activities. In fact, it was awarded Best Practice in Plastic Upcycling during the Araw ng Bayan last year. It also participated in the recent Trabaho Negosyo job and business fair where their initial products of bracelets, fans, wire organizers, key holders, and other souvenir items made from waste materials were showcased. Having seen the opportunity of the Upcycling Project, the association sought the assistance of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) through the Sustainable Livelihood Project (SLP) and proposed funding for the SLP building and is seeking more assistance of other agencies for the project enhancement, product development, and marketing.

And having seen the

project myself and listening to how the members struggled to gather recyclable items like shampoos, candies, biscuits and diaper wraps, among others, to turn them to something cute and usable, I am reminded of the call of Philippine Information Agency Director-General Harold Clavite in his article: "New Year's gift of fortitude: Help protect the environment."

In that article, Clavite talks about Philippine Information Agency's commitment to environmental advocacies as he called on every citizen to take important steps to be part of the advocacy. "Whether they are government or private sector-led, companies, organizations, and communities must consider the environment in its decisions and in the conduct of celebrations, occasions, and even down to its day-to-day activities including printing of documents and ordering food," he wrote.



Road Board deemed dead

We want the current and future funds now earmarked for the Road Board to be part of the General Fund

By Mario J. Mallari and Hananeel Bordey

For the Duterte administration, the abolition of the allegedly corruption-plagued Road Board and the transfer of its funds sourced from the collection of the Motor Vehicle User's Charge (MVUC) to the state's General Fund were done deals, Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III said yesterday.

Leaders of the House of Representatives had held up the approval of the budget and are now saying they would review the 2019 General Appropriations Bill due to the "widening fiscal deficit."

Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno, who is also being targeted by House leaders by linking him to corrupt practices, had revealed that he refused demands from legislators to release money from the P45-billion Road Board fund.

Diokno said the Road Board has been the "cash cow" of the previous administration.

Dominguez said the House measure of former Speaker Pantaleon Alvarez abolishing the body, which the Senate adopted, was already "covered by the original proposal of the

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Road Board deemed dead

As Congress already passed this proposal, the DoF's letter to the House leadership requesting it to pass the remaining tax packages expectedly does not include the Road Board abolition

From page 1

Department of Finance (DoF) to Congress under the Duterte administration's Comprehensive Tax Reform Program (CTRP) or what is now the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) law.

House scrutiny needed

Dominguez said making the current and future funds of the Road Board as part of the General Fund will ensure that their appropriation is scrutinized by lawmakers as part of the normal budgeting process.

The reform of the MVUC by adjusting its rates to account for inflation and simplifying it by collapsing the multitude of rates into a single one based on weight is included in Package 1-B of the CTRP, Dominguez said.

While the transfer of the Road funds to the General Fund will improve the transparency and accountability of its use, it does not add any revenue at all.

Complementing proposed reforms by the DoF is the abolition of the Road Board, which is authorized under Republic Act 8794 to manage and utilize the MVUC funds.

The DoF also specifically proposed to Congress that the Road Board funds be transferred to the General Fund.

"We want the current and future funds now earmarked for the Road Board to be part of the General Fund, which will then be appropriated by the legislature as part of the normal budgeting process and

not allocated by an unelected Board, which lessens the transparency on the use of the funds," Dominguez said.

A given

Finance Undersecretary Kari Kendrick Chua said, since both the Senate and the House had approved the bill abolishing the Road Board, the DoF did not find it necessary to include in its 20 September 2018 letter to Congress a request for its abolition and instead detailed the remaining tax reform proposals under the CTRP, which it asked lawmakers to approve.

"Both the House and Senate passed the bill on the abolition of the Road Board, which was in response to our proposals as outlined under Package 1-B of the CTRP," Chua said.

"As Congress already passed this proposal, the DoF's letter to the House leadership requesting it to pass the remaining tax packages expectedly does not include the Road Board abolition. The DoF-proposed restructuring of the Motor Vehicle User's Charge does include the transfer of the road fund to the General Fund," he said.

House erred

Chua said a House leader erroneously pointed out "even the DoF did not want the Road Board abolished," because its letter to the House did not mention this when it formally asked for the restructuring and adjustments in the MVUC as part of its appeal for the approval of the Duterte administration's remaining tax reform packages.

Last 12 September 2018, the Senate adopted the House version on the Road Board abolition to dispense with the bicameral conference process. The House, however, rescinded its approval of the bill on third reading on the same day.

"While the transfer of the Road funds to the General Fund will improve the transparency and accountability of its use, it does not add any revenue at all, as the MVUC is also part of the existing revenue base," Chua said.

He added the only adjustment to the MVUC rates will increase revenues earmarked for road repairs, air pollution control and road safety improvements.

A House leader erroneously pointed out "even the DoF did not want the Road Board abolished."

Flood fund backed

Senators yesterday expressed support to President Rodrigo Duterte's plan to use the tax fund for flood control projects and for relocation sites in the Bicol region.

The President made known his intention following the havoc wreaked by tropical depression "Usman" in Region 5 where at least 126 people died, mostly due to landslides.

Mr. Duterte particularly said that Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council Chairman Eduardo del Rosario could use the fund for permanent relocation of residents in safe areas in Albay and Camarines Sur.

The President stressed that he will allow the release of the P46-billion Road User's Tax (RUT) only if it is intended for good use, as he slammed corruption in the utilization of the fund in the past.

Road safety needs funds

Sen. Joseph Victor Ejercito urged that part of the fund should be retained for road safety projects.

"While I support PRRD's (Mr. Duterte's initials) proposal, I suggest that the portion for road safety projects be retained and the remaining portion be allotted for the suggestion of the President," Ejercito said.

"We cannot sacrifice the whole road safety program. This would mean saving lives, too," he added.

For his part, Sen. Sonny Angara also welcomed the President's move, but explained that until the Road Board is abolished, an amendment to the law is necessary to allow such utilization of the fund.

"It's a good idea since that is public money anyway, but the law

on the road board needs to be amended if that is the purpose, because there are limited uses under the Road Board law," he said.

Angara, however, stressed that when the board is abolished, the RUT will automatically go to the general fund of the government.

House takes potshots

In a statement, a House leader said that the government disbursement continues to outpace the increase in revenues, saying that the numbers of the fiscal deficit for 2018 "do not look so good."



CHR investigates 'carbon majors' by sing more fossil fuels

The Philippines' Commission on Human Rights (CHR) has accepted the petition by Greenpeace and other environmental groups in mid-2016 and it has launched the "National Public Inquiry on the Impact of Climate Change on the Human Rights of Filipino People and the Responsibility of the Carbon Majors Therefor, If Any."

Most of the climate investigations were done in their Quezon

City office but some were also done in the provinces and abroad.

On Aug. 30, 2018, I sent a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to the CHR, asking among others the following information:

- Amount of public resources spent and to be spent on each investigation and hearings abroad.

- Funding, how much: (1) Paris meeting in December 2015; (2) Sept. 24-28, 2018 in New York City; (3) Nov. 5-9, 2018, London School of Economics.

On Sept. 13, 2018, CHR Commissioner Roberto Eugenio "Totsie" Cadiz, Chairman of the National Inquiry on Climate Change (NICC), replied to my FOI request, saying that, regarding funding, "(1) Paris trip was partially funded by the Business and Human Rights Resource Center (BHRRC).... costs to CHR Regular Fund for the various meetings amounted to P124,396.80. (2) NYC trip September 2018 will be funded by the European Union through its GoJust facility... The

budget allocated by GoJust for this activity is P523,600.00. (3) London trip November 2018, CHR is still looking at potential donor agencies."

Commissioner Totsie Cadiz is a friend. In 2017 I went to his office and over coffee and cookies, we talked about this thing and I verbally expressed my dismay why the CHR would investigate companies for their phony "crimes" of causing less rain and more rain, less flood and more flood, less storms and more storms, less cold and more cold. Totsie asked me to send a written position paper. In their letter last September, he reiterated the invitation for me to participate in CHR's inquiry.

On Oct. 29, 2018, I sent Commissioner Cadiz a formal position paper, seven pages, and argued that "I think the Commission has demeaned the main purpose of its creation, that it focus on civil and political rights."

I attached charts, numbers, news reports, photos and other facts showing that climate change is natural and cyclical. Nature-made, not man-made.

- a. 4.5 billion years, warming-cooling cycle and CO2 levels.
- b. 500 million years of unrelatedness between atmospheric CO2 and temperature.
- c. 420,000 years, Vostok ice cores, temperature and CO2 level.
- d. 2,000 years temperature reconstruction for N. Hemisphere.

The CHR has fallen into the trap set by Greenpeace and other environmental groups of using lots of scare-alarm-Frankenstein tactics about the "man-made" climate change. Among these tactics are the following:

- A. "Last chance to save the planet" warnings.
From 1992 to 2018, there are almost yearly news reports on this. Below are five examples.

1. "FEATURE: Last chance to save the planet?" *New Scientist*, May 30, 1992.

2. "A Global Warming Treaty's Last Chance," *TIME*, July 16, 2001.

3. "Climate talks 'last chance' to avoid catastrophe," *NZ Herald*, Dec. 2, 2007.

4. "Climate change: Paris 'last chance' for action," *BBC*, April 22, 2015.

5. "Global Warming and Climate Instability: One Last Chance to Save Ourselves," *Global Research*, March 12, 2018.

B. Predicting climate apocalypse, all failures.

1. "Arctic summers ice-free by 2013," *BBC*, Dec. 12, 2007.

2. "NASA Climate Scientist Says 'We're Toast,'" *CBS News*, June 24, 2008.

3. "Gore: Polar ice cap may disappear by summer 2014," *USA Today*, Dec. 14, 2009.

MY CUP OF LIBERTY BIENVENIDO S. OPLAS, JR.

People who lambast fossil fuels use lots of fossil fuels via frequent jet-setting and global travels. The UN Conference of Parties (COP) annual and global meetings attract on average some 30,000 people: from national and local governments, multilaterals, media, NGOs.

C. Exaggerated warming predictions by computer models.

The UN IPCC climate models have produced on average about 2x more warming compared to actual rates in global surface temperature and deep ocean.

HYPOCRISY OF THE ANTI-FOSSIL FUELS LOBBY

People who lambast fossil fuels use lots of fossil fuels via frequent jet-setting and global travels. The double talk can be avoided if they use solar planes, or wind-powered giant kites, or witchcraft-

powered brooms but they don't. Three examples here.

1. Greenpeace. It has launched several polyester airships with big bold slogan, "Say No to Fossil Fuels" — when those airships use propane, a fossil fuel. In addition, Greenpeace people have frequent global travels to sustain campaigns in their 26 global offices covering all seven continents except Antarctica.

2. United Nations. The UN Conference of Parties (COP) annual and global meetings attract on average some 30,000 people:



2/2

08 JAN 2013

DATE

CHR Investigate . . .

from national and local governments, multilaterals, media, NGOs. COP 1 in 1995 Germany, COP 2 in 1996 Switzerland, COP 3 in 1997 Kyoto Protocol Japan, 1998 Argentina, 1999 Germany, 2000 Netherlands, 2001 Morocco, 2002 India, 2003 Italy, 2004 Argentina, 2005 Canada, 2006 Kenya, 2007 Indonesia, 2008 Poland, 2009 Denmark, 2010 Mexico, 2011 South Africa, 2012 Qatar, 2013 Poland, 2014 Peru, 2015 France, 2016 Morocco, 2017 Germany, 2018 Poland.

On Nov. 30, 2015, *New York Daily News* report "Paris climate change conference creates its own massive carbon footprint", it noted that "A whopping 300,000 tons of carbon dioxide will be churned out during the two-week climate change summit in Paris... an estimated 50,000 people, including media and world leaders, gather to discuss ways to wean the world off fossil fuels..."

3. CHR. As mentioned above, they have made the following jet-setting travels: (a) December 2015 in Paris, (b) Sept. 27-28, 2018 in NYC, (c) Nov. 7-9, 2018 in London. Then (d) 3rd week of January 2019, The Hague, Netherlands.

The CHR is wasting its time, wasting taxpayers' money by hearing such phony claims while exhibiting the double talk on high fossil fuel use and carbon emissions. There are thousands of cases of Filipino people whose civil and political rights have been violated by the past and current administrations, tens of thousands of human lives unjustly ended by the continuing dirty "drugs war." CHR personnel and other resources should focus there. ■

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